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ABSTRACT

This book reports on the research findings of the Pakistan Study, a collaboration between the Harvard Institute for International Development and other organizations in Pakistan. The focus is primarily on what affects student learning in Pakistan's government-sponsored primary schools. Chapter 1 discusses primary schools in Pakistan and the project undertaken to assess factors contributing to the effectiveness of Pakistan's primary schools. Chapter 2 considers the social background and health of students as well as their enrollment, achievement, and completion rates in schools. Chapter 3 examines the role of teachers in student achievement. Chapters 4 and 8 question whether certification in teacher-training institutes has more or less influence on student achievement than the number of years the teacher has spent in school. Chapter 5 looks at whether the gender of students and of teachers has any impact on student achievement. The effect of availability of school buildings, textbooks, and other teaching equipment on enrollment and achievement is debated in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 explores the impact of organization of administration, management, and leadership on the performance of schools. Analysis in chapter 8 challenges theories claiming that the social background of students is a far more powerful predictor of student achievement than characteristics of teachers and what happens in schools. Chapter 9 examines innovations in the primary schools and cites ways of increasing the success of such innovations. The last chapter discusses how effectiveness of primary schools can be raised and concludes that although cross-national research on education is valuable, it is important to base policy recommendations on an understanding of the country that wishes to change its education system. Contains 91 references. (BAC)